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AUTHOR Schliessmann, Michael R.
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ABSTRACT

For a communication studies administrator, the scholar envisioned in Ernest Boyer's "Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate" is an instructive guide to faculty and administrators pondering the balance or relationship between teaching and research. It is an immodest claim that each discipline teaches well but broadly from life. To a degree, this is a facet of the scholarship of teaching envisioned by Boyer. Faculty today value teaching. Pedagogical digging should be viewed as valued research. Boyer's position on the research of teaching has prompted South Dakota State University (SDSU), and particularly the College of Arts and Science to approach research, scholarship, and creative activity in an invigorating way. Boyer's historical analysis of scholarship through the ages makes clear that a nation of teachers primarily dependent on research prowess for advancement is not new. He contends that faculty today have grown into a society of elitists; implicitly he discredits undergraduate teaching. The profession must continue to foster a cadre of scholars who study teaching itself. A close reading of Boyer suggests that the greatest rewards for good teaching, and the greatest love for good teaching come from faculty in liberal arts colleges. Faculty must define themselves as faculty of liberal arts colleges. The system for faculty evaluation used by SDSU and the Board of Regents allows for considerable latitude and this latitude must be used to reward teaching and scholarship on teaching. The basic speech course can be the home of great teaching. (TB)

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# ERNEST BOYER'S SCHOLARSHIP: AN ADMINISTRATIVE VIEW

MICHAEL R. SCHLIESSMANN
COMMUNICATION STUDIES AND THEATRE
SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESENTED AT THESPEECH COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION
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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

ERNEST BOYER'S SCHOLARSHIP: AN ADMINISTRATIVE VIEW

As an administrator I often have non-teaching time I feel compelled to fill. Often these times can by filled with bureaucracy. These minutiae are critical to the department, the university and to the system. I also believe these are often for the betterment of individual faculty. In caught-up times I read in my office, retaining a more comfortable chair beside an open bookcase for the pleasure. The book du jour is there, often prominent, often under clutter. It is usually an escape book, not completely necessary to academe or administration.

The present attendee on the escape shelf is Loren Reid's Professor on the Loose (1992). Neil Postman (1969 & 1979) has been read. It strikes me that these books about us are about doing something--teaching. It also strikes me that Professor Reid's exhibition of the professor on the loose is similar to the scholar that Ernest Boyer envisions.

It is an immodest claim that our discipline teaches well but broadly from life its ownself. To a degree, this is a facet of the scholarship of teaching envisioned by Boyer. Our professoriate is loose upon the undergraduates of our institutions, conserving and subverting, reconciling values with knowledge, individual experience with broader culture and perhaps perception with reality.

We, Boyer and us, in our collective beliefs value teaching. Pedogogical "digging" should be viewed as valued research. Boyer's position on the research of teaching has prompted South Dakota State University (SDSU), and particularly the College of Arts and Science to approach research, scholarship and creative activity in an invigorating way.

As a land grant institution perennially faced with decisions about promotion and tenure, our university has wrestled with the decisions and weight of decisions that have

faced each of us as we applied for or evaluated promotion and tenure requests. Each faculty member is expected, to some degree, to "research". That is, the faculty member is expected to produce something for dissemination to learned colleagues. Many disciplines in the university do basic or applied research. Others are creative artists in the usual sense. Since 1977, these forms of scholarship and creativity have been officially recognized. In some cases, research on teaching has also been recognized.

Ernest Boyer's Contributions

Recent developments in academe have set the stage for better recognizing such scholarship. Ernest L. Boyer's Scholarship Reconsidered (1990) has let such research out of the closet. Boyer has been, rightfully so, commended for such a generous approach to scholarship. Some of our colleagues, for example, have commented privately that their dean or tenure committee would never recognize pedagogical research as valuable.

Boyer's historical analysis of scholarship through the ages is relatively simple. Initially scholarship prepared students for civic and religious leadership. Later, as our nation grew, research centered on the practical or the applied. Additionally, scholars have often found prominence in the discovery of basic truth, be it philosophical or scientific (pp. 3-7). As we study today, we realize that society is based firmly on all three types of scholarship. WGN News, commenting on the graduation of the 20,000th Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, concluded that institution graduates scholars who become teachers and continue a cycle of excellence (1994). SDSU's graduate assistant policy statement articulates a similar philosophy: "The graduate assistantship can be compared with the apprenticeship teaching-learning model. Graduate Assistants are functioning as 'professionals in-training' following basically a faculty role model" (C. J. Peterson, memo, August 19, 1994).

I hope this describes most of us to a degree, and does not represent a naivete on the part of the news media and my own academic institution.

The idea that we are a nation of teachers primarily dependent on research prowess for advancement is not new, as Boyer chronicles (pp. 11-13). He contends we grew to a society of elitists from this view, and implicitly discredits our undergraduate teaching. I believe his discredit to be accurate to a degree. This occurs, despite what Boyer calls a mosaic of talent (pp. 27-41).

Boyer details who we are and what we want to be. While we accept the standard definition of a faculty member as one engaged in teaching, research and service, we define ourselves in a slightly different fashion. Unfortunately, administrators must shoulder some of the blame for an unhealthy reliance of esoteric research or scholarship. According to Boyer, many of us value teaching as the ultimate expression of what we are (p. 32). Yet a high reliance is placed on research presented to learned audience when decisions for advancement are made (pp. 30-31).

It is equally important to our discussions as faculty and administration that we give Boyer a full reading. While we may gnash our teeth over a reliance on teaching or research or service, we can begin to plow new ground. Boyer addresses the issue of maturing faculty and calls for close attention to the need for faculty renewal (p. 43). Since over two-thirds of us view teaching as our life, (p. 43) it is important to develop a method for advancement that enhances teaching effectiveness, however, it is measured.

Complicated though it may seem, we may need to use the profile system for faculty articulated by Boyer (p. 51). This system was enacted, in part, by Bentley College as that traditional teaching institution was plodded into a research mode. Ernest A. Kallman (1992) of Bentley College chronicles the change of that institution from a teaching to a research college. The change was necessary following a mandated change

to the research mode. The college feared that traditional emphasis on refereed journals, a fear supported by James McGovern's (1992) analysis of national trends.

Bentley's solution was to identify tracks for faculty to favor. As importantly, however, was Bentley's choice to allow diversity in what "counted" as scholarship (Kallman, 1992, 117). It created a "Teacher/Scholar Model" which included several working assumptions. Notably it recognized the differences between disciplines. More notably it openly stated that "The undergraduate college is our bread and butter" (p.118).

The model was, to its credit, defined to recognize that "Scholarship need not mean just publishing in refereed journals, but putting 'something' out 'there' for critique and/or discussion" (p. 119). It also recognized a faculty "life cycle" relative to teacher/scholar roles (p. 119).

Boyer's system also includes a teaching profile, a research profile, a service profile and an administrative profile. No profile should exclude the other facets of academic life.

It should be obvious by now that I have addressed none of the scholarship of _____ categories developed by Boyer. This is intentional, for I believe an understanding of academe and its self-image is as important to the discussion as is an explication of these categories.

Boyer develops his reconsidered notions of scholarship by "Enlarging the Perspective" in Chapter 2. To many of us these are now part of our vocabulary of scholarship. More to the point, how should an administrator view this view of scholarship, considering the fact that most of us are teachers, and most of us teach the basic course? I see nothing in Boyer's analysis of scholarship that would deny an administrator great latitude in evaluating scholarship and teaching as part of the Gestalt.

cultures that have bred us (p. xi). As scholars who teach, we should not be expected to know less of our culture and more of our discipline. Broad general knowledge is a prerequisite to analysis and argument. Yet, by example, few of my "advanced" speech students knew who occupied the Presidency in 1972. At a minimum, we must teach learning. We do this largely by example.

More must be said. Administrators must abandon or modify their view that other forms of scholarship are not about teaching. We must continue to foster a cadre of scholars who study TEACHING itself. While we may publish the "Rhetoric of Esoterica" in the leading journal devoted to the cause, other scholars must be recognized for their contributions to the study of effective teaching. While this group recognizes the contributions of those who study classroom behavior, communication education and the training of teaching assistants, our administrators must promote the scholarship of teaching, so defined, when promotion and tenure decisions are made. This is scholarship about teaching and it must no longer be viewed as a poor relation of other research. This is scholarship of integration, application and discovery, where the classroom is the laboratory.

We cannot hide and deny the relevance of the scholarship of discovery, for example. Nor, however, can we hide and discredit our own ability to study the teaching of communication. Boyer has given us an impetus to develop our own standards for scholarship. His treatise has major qualities of a grass roots movement which can gain adherents from one isolated academic community to another. When the grass roots create a groundswell of academic opinion, it is likely that administration will accept these tenets of scholarship. We faculty are the gardeners, the field is fertile. I believe the administrator should be the caretaker of this fertile ground.

Prosperous faculty are usually happy. A foolhearty administrator who denies this public shift about scholarship in faculty sentiment is one who may be best retired to

Boyer analyzes the scholarship of discovery, integration, application and teaching (pp. 15-25). I propose that we do all of these as members of the academy. As teachers who are, broadly defined, scholars, we bring the scholarship of others into our classrooms. While it could be argued that all of this is simply a lumping of the scholarship of teaching, I believe it is more.

The scholarship of discovery, in the traditional sense, may be what we do the least, but we expand each student's horizon as we discuss the findings of basic research in our basic courses. This is the scholarship of integration. We, however, have the privilege of integrating our content with that of dozens of other fields of inquiry. In Boyer's words, we are "scholars we give meaning to isolated facts, putting them into perspective" (p.18). The logical progression of our own research into the world is to assist our students in application (p.21), to make connections beyond ourselves and perhaps beyond themselves. This is the point of an undergraduate education, properly defined.

What then of the scholarship of teaching? It is of two parts, with, I believe, a greater whole. Boyer describes teaching as a "dynamic endeavor involving all the analogies, metaphors, and images that build bridges between the teacher's understanding and the student's learning" (p. 23). As undergraduate educators, we must reflect on the implications of this statement--we are defined by our scholarship--what we know and can communicate. This is also the new scholar Boyer defines. Or perhaps it is the old scholar, newly appreciated. As administrators, we must recognize the prominence of undergraduate education and appreciate the whole cloth from which teaching is made. It is, according to Boyer, an inclusive view of scholarship (p. 24).

Part of the scholarship of teaching must focus on teaching what we are. I sincerely believe E. D. Hirsch, Jr. (1988) is on target in describing what the literate citizen should know. His dictionary asks, somewhat simply, that we understand the

private life. Further, I believe faculty can address this administration issue by reverting to the difficult verbiage of the past. A close reading of Boyer suggests the greatest rewards for good teaching, and the greatest love for good teaching come from faculty in the liberal arts colleges. I propose that we define ourselves, in our undergraduate roles, as liberal arts teachers. This doesn't void our responsibilities as scholars, but it does shape our understanding of who we are. The "bread and butter" quality of the basic course and the rest of the core should not mean they are the bland staple of an undergraduate diet. Nor should this mean that they are relinquished to a role subservient to major courses, graduate study or traditional forms of scholarship. It means we should excel in this role because this part of the diet of our students is food for life.

South Dakota's Experience

Our system newsletter (South Dakota Board of Regents News, Summer 1994) echoed the view of faculty that most of us view teaching as our primary responsibility. Teaching was described in a guest editorial as the "first among our labors" (p. 1). Our system reported, from the data gathered by the Higher Education Research Institute, that faculty rated "good teaching" as their primary goal (p. 2).

The system of faculty evaluation used by South Dakota State University and the Board of Regents has incorporated a number of suggestions implied by the trends Boyer documents. To a certain extent it created administrative chaos. To a greater extent, in my opinion, it created an administrative nirvana.

Our system is in the middle year of a three year collective bargaining agreement (1993). There are changes in this agreement that necessitate action on each campus and in each department. The major change is one of self-determination. The principle evaluation article of the agreement states that "performance evaluations have as their primary purpose the assessment of whether, consistent with contemporary standards of

the institution, a faculty member..." (p. 30).

While this language isn't new, it was not until the beginning of the 1993 academic year that SDSU was directed to establish "contemporary standards." That direction created a flurry of faculty and administrative activity.

Driving this flurry were statements in the agreement which illuminated expectations of faculty. This is essentially a list of representative faculty activities, any of which might be expected of a member of the academy. Notably, these statements gave recognition to campus differences, department differences, discipline differences and assignment differences. If effect, each university was able to recognize those activities upon which to base evaluation decisions (p.92). Furthermore, and more importantly, faculty input was sought.

The conclusion of this process is a "departmental standards document" which outlines expectations of faculty. We are expected to establish parameters for our own performance. These parameters are somewhat flexible and are labeled QUALITY and EXCELLENCE. A faculty member must demonstrate excellence to be promoted and tenured.

The chaos appeared when the process began, because it began quickly. To the credit of the system, however, standards documents were allowed to be refined over a period of a year. In skeletal form, they were used for annual evaluation for 1993. In detail, they are to be used for annual evaluation and promotion and tenure decisions in the 1994 cycle.

Despite the fact that the process is governed by collective bargaining, my assessment is that faculty welcomed the opportunity to have significant input into their academic futures. In theory and at least in part in practice, these departmental documents were created by the faculty. There was administrative direction, of course. In the College of Arts and Science, which I believe functions as a liberal arts college,

faculty were provided with a copy of Boyer before the standards document was required. Our department embraced Boyer's philosophy and his view of scholarship is embedded in our standards document. Faculty provide an overview of departmental standards when they request promotion and/or tenure and incorporate those standards as points of reference in each annual evaluation.

Administrative nirvana occurs at this point. Faculty and the department head have a common point of departure in discussing expectations and performance. Faculty "own" the process. As a department head, I have added impetus to understand each faculty role in a multi-faceted department. I am to uphold the standards of the department when addressing evaluation issues. I am prepared to argue for faculty based on their assessment of performance relative to the standards established by the department.

Despite all this "documentation", the process encourages flexibility and creativity--the same precepts endorsed by Boyer. A faculty member may adjust her/his role and have that accepted. I suspect a department head might suggest a role for a faculty member as well.

Perhaps we are fortunate to have a process that is inclusive. It recognizes our diversity in a land-grant institution. It recognizes faculty roles as diverse. It clearly adheres to the tri-partite roles of faculty at the same time.

Conclusion

I do suggest we realize that society in the larger sense expects excellent teaching from any classroom instructor. Our undergraduate students are attracted to us and our discipline because of our teaching excellence, which I suspect is also a function of our personality.

I also suggest we recognize and reward teaching and use a broadened definition of scholarship to enhance both activities. We should teach, learn well what we teach,

continue learning and learn about teaching. As the returning veterans of Loren Reid's experience demanded more and different of his generation of "scholars", we too have learned our students and the public demand more from us. The basic course can be the home of great teaching, our students the beneficiaries, because we've invested wisely.

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